

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- Sub A1 >
1. An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising a *FIE* polynucleotide sequence, which polynucleotide sequence specifically hybridizes to SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:3 under stringent conditions.
 2. The isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 1, wherein the *FIE* polynucleotide is between about at least about 100 nucleotides in length.
 3. ~~The isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 1, wherein the *FIE* polynucleotide is SEQ ID NO:1.~~
 4. ~~The isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 1, wherein the *FIE* polynucleotide is SEQ ID NO:3.~~
 5. The isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 1, further comprising a plant promoter operably linked to the *FIE* polynucleotide.
 6. ~~The isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 5, wherein the plant promoter is from a *FIE1* gene.~~
 7. The isolated nucleic acid of claim 6, wherein the *FIE* polynucleotide is linked to the promoter in an antisense orientation.
 8. ~~An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising a *FIE* polynucleotide sequence, which polynucleotide sequence encodes *FIE* polypeptide as shown in SEQ ID NO:2 or SEQ ID NO:4.~~
 9. a transgenic plant comprising an expression cassette containing a plant promoter operably linked to a heterologous *FIE* polynucleotide of claim 1.
 10. The transgenic plant of claim 9, wherein the heterologous *FIE* polynucleotide encodes a *FIE* polypeptide.
- Sub A2 >
- Sub A3 >

Sub A4 > 11. The transgenic plant of claim 10, wherein the FIE polypeptide is as shown in SEQ ID NO:2 or SEQ ID NO:4.

12. The transgenic plant of claim 9, wherein the heterologous *FIE* polynucleotide is linked to the promoter in an antisense orientation.

13. The transgenic plant of claim 9, wherein the plant promoter is from a *FIE* gene.

Sub A5 > 14. The transgenic plant of claim 13, wherein the *FIE* gene is as shown in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:3.

15. A method of modulating endosperm development in a plant, the method comprising introducing into the plant an expression cassette containing a plant promoter operably linked to a heterologous *FIE* polynucleotide.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the heterologous *FIE* polynucleotide encodes an FIE polypeptide.

Sub A6 > 17. The method of claim 16, wherein the FIE polypeptide has an amino acid sequence as shown in SEQ ID NO:2 or SEQ ID NO:4.

18. The method of claim 15, wherein the heterologous *FIE* polynucleotide is linked to the promoter in an antisense orientation.

Sub A7 > 19. The method of claim 15, wherein the heterologous *FIE* polynucleotide is SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:3.

20. The method of claim 15, wherein the plant promoter is from a *FIE* gene.

add A8 > 21. The method of claim 15, wherein the expression cassette is introduced into the plant through a sexual cross.